Cluster Reporter / Annual Report 2007-08

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Dear friends,

You must be aware that the Regional Baha'i Council was bringing out a magazine called 'Facilitator Reporter'. In that magazine the report of the activities of the facilitators and their achievements were reported and interesting stories and insights were shared. In its last meeting the Regional Baha'i Council decided to change the format of that magazine so that the report of all the activities in the cluster could be shared. In a way this magazine will tell us how far we have gone in achieving the goals of the five year plan. With less than ten cycles left we really have our work cut out for us. But looking at the enthusiasm and the dedication of our Baha'is we have no doubt the goals of the plan can be achieved.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the Baha'is in our region have really striven hard. Many believers have been working day and night, travelling within the cluster and outside the cluster, trying to establish all the components of the plan, working on all fronts, starting personal core activities and encouraging others to do the same, taking part in teaching and consolidation plans, arranging and attending institute campaigns, reflection meetings and so on and so forth. Because of all these efforts today we have ten clusters with their Intensive Programs of Growth in place. This is really a great achievement. But the task that lies before us is much more gigantic than what we have already achieved. Half the period of the plan is over and we have achieved only 25 percent of the plan. A close look at the progress in the clusters shows that if we progress at our present speed we will probably end the five year plan with about 22 to 25 A clusters. This means we need to almost double our efforts to fulfill all the goals of the plan.

Now, now don't panic. I know many out there are working at full capacity and it is impossible for them to do any more. But there are others who are either new or are still not fully involved and these are the people we should encourage to take up more and more activities.

Looking at the shape of our remaining non—IPG clusters we see that only 3 are in fairly good shape. That means in the coming ten cycles we need an army of pioneers. To facilitate the work of pioneers we have appointed two people who you can directly contact for information about places that need pioneers. These two friends are Mr. Pramod and Mr. Sudhir. If you are interested to go for short term pioneering discuss with your Auxiliary Board member and see the possibilities then contact Mr. Sudhir or Mr. Pramod for any details that you need to know. Apart from pioneers who will stay for a few months we need volunteers who can go for shorter periods, even one or two weeks time. See when your holidays are and inform Mr. Sudhir well in advance so that we can utilize your services.

In the National Consultative gathering at Lucknow certain clusters were identified as seedbed clusters. These clusters took the responsibility of working with neighbouring clusters and assisting them in the coming cycles so that they too can become IPG clusters. A great responsibility lies on these seedbed clusters.

These are the clusters that will need to provide the human resources, the pioneers as well the guidance to these neighbouring clusters till they are ready to stand on their own feet.

As far as our IPG clusters are concerned they are all progressing very well and we can see they are moving towards maturity. In these clusters a great responsibility lies on the shoulders of the animators and tutors. These dear friends wherever they are really need to focus their attention on starting Junior youth groups and conducting study circles. We also need teachers of children classes to make sure their classes not only run regularly but also to make sure the children who have finished the lessons in Ruhi 3 start the lessons in Ruhi 3a.

In the final analysis the real responsibility of the progress in the core activities in any cluster lies on the shoulders of the coordinators and facilitators. We have frequently seen how when the coordinators and facilitators of a particular activity work systematically there is a sudden increase in that activity in a cluster. Again if the coordinator or facilitator in charge of a particular activity gets distracted, that activity goes down.

The period ahead looks quite exciting. We have the plan in front of us. We have the capacity to achieve the plan. Of course it won't be easy. But in this life nothing worthwhile is easy. If a man wants to build a straw hut it will be easy he can build it in a day and it will be washed away after the first heavy rain. A man who wants to build a palace needs to plan for it, he needs to work hard for it, he will have sleepless nights till he finally manages to build his palace.

But we are not building huts or palaces, we are working to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The kingdom of God which has been promised to man for so many thousands of years is now under construction and we are the lucky ones building it. Don't fool yourself by thinking it will be an easy task, the task will be difficult but well worth it. We have to strive, we have to work hard, we have to endeavour, till we finally achieve the goals of the plan.

Let us take a decision today—for the next nine and a half cycles we will focus only on one thing - the goals of the plan. If we do that we will achieve our goals. If we do that we would have grown one step closer to establishing the Kingdom of God on earth. The goal before us needs our undivided attention. Let this be our Mantra for the coming ten cycles—**undivided attention.** No matter what we do, let us decide to give it our undivided attention. It does not matter what part of the plan we are working for, it may be a children class or a Junior youth group, a study circle or a devotional meeting, looking after a neighbouring cluster or taking part in a teaching team, going on a home visit or working for the welfare of society. No matter what we do let us give it our undivided attention and make sure the activity we undertake goes from strength to strength.

So friends, "*Let us ARISE and persevere to the very end. Let us become worthy "warriors" of Baha'u'llah until, in the words of our beloved Guardian, weary but triumphant we bring in the harvest. No hesitation! No delay! No retreat! Onward to victory!"*

Regional Baha'i Council of Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Uttarakhand

There is no time to lose. The issues at stake call for immediate action, demand unrelaxing vigilance, **undivided attention**, and a consecration unexampled in the annals of the Faith.

- Shoghi Effendi

He would appeal to each and every one of Bahá'u'lláh's devoted friends in that locality to gird the loins of endeavour in His path, and to work with ceaseless enthusiasm and **undivided attention** for the furtherance of the teaching work.

- Shoghi Effendi

"We must strive day and night and think and work. What can I say that may become effective? What can I do that may bring results?...

"Nothing else will be useful today. The interests of such a glorious Cause will not advance without **undivided attention**. While we are carrying this load we cannot carry any other load!"

-
Abdul-Baha

PROGRESS OF CLUSTERS—THE SECOND MOVEMENT

Sitting at the Regional Headquarters and going through all the wonderful reports we cannot but express our happiness at the wonderful things that are taking place. We see how slowly clusters that were D start to take on activities. In the beginning they move two steps forward and one step backward (well sometimes three steps backward), but as the friends persevere and keep visiting these clusters then a small group forms who slowly take on the responsibility of the cluster.

The study of the growth of clusters shows something interesting. In seven D clusters taken up for activities during the plan there was a quick forward movement. This forward movement is usually due to the visits of believers from a neighbouring cluster and the efforts of one or two local people. The cluster moves ahead quickly but something or the other happens, either the key believer leaves the cluster, or he becomes inactive, or a group of people oppose the activities, or due to any other reason the activity suddenly comes to a stop. This may be considered as the first critical phase in the progress of a new C cluster. In the clusters where the believers from the seedbed cluster persevered and kept visiting the dependant cluster, a new group was formed that was more dynamic than the first group. In clusters where the believers from the seedbed cluster gave up after the first test everything was lost. We really need to understand that setbacks are necessary for the progress of a cluster. In the same way that we sometimes have to cut a bush to make it grow faster. Circumstances take place that may temporarily look like a setback but which are in effect necessary to develop a new group of spiritual leaders in a cluster, who would otherwise not have come forward if everything was moving as it was before the crisis.

So the next time your dependant cluster receives a setback be happy as one door is being closed so that a better and wider door can be opened. All you need to do is to prayerfully visit the cluster and keep your eyes open to find where the new door has been opened. ***It will always be there***, there may be another family, or a nearby village, or somebody who you had not noticed before but there is always another group prepared by God to take the cluster to its next level of development. Once you have found that new door the cluster will move ahead at a much quicker pace. Later a new crisis may be necessary to carry the cluster even more forward. Never forget a setback is always followed by quick progress in places where the believers have persevered.

Keeping the above caution in mind let us have a quick look at our Clusters:

C clusters:

A quick look at our C clusters shows they are at different stages of development. **Agra** can no more be considered a C cluster, in fact it is now a B cluster and at the speed it is moving the day is not far when it will become an A cluster. We need to thank Mrs. Gloria, Mr. Hirdesh Yadav, Dr. Dey, members of the Local Assembly and their families and last but not least Miss Neeru who has gone pioneering to Agra. Of course there are many others who are working selflessly in Agra or who go visiting Agra from Delhi and we are grateful to all of them. many youth from Agra have gone to the 45 day intensive training program at

A "best teacher" and an "exemplary believer" is ultimately neither more nor less than an ordinary Baha'i who has consecrated himself to the work of the Faith, deepened his knowledge and understanding of its Teachings, placed his confidence in Baha'u'llah, and arisen to serve Him to the best of his ability. This door is one which we are assured will open before the face of every follower of the Faith who knocks hard enough, so to speak. When the will and the desire are strong enough, the means will be found and the way opened either to do more work locally, to go to a new goal town within the United States, or to enter the foreign pioneer field…

-Shoghi Effendi

Panchgani. With this new added strength things should move even faster in Agra. In fact the believers in Agra have decided to become an A cluster by December and they will act as a seedbed cluster next year and develop a rural cluster next to them. After having such a wonderful achievement in Agra the believers in Delhi are now diverting their attention to other clusters. **Ghaziabad, Noida** and **Bulanshahr** are the next targets of Delhi. As this magazine is being typed we just heard some of the believers in Delhi have gone visiting Bulandshahr. They have come back with news of great success over there. With the likes of Subhash, Mr. Vinod and Ajay in Ghaziabad one wonders why it has still not become an A cluster. A detailed plan has been made by the Delhi community for Noida, Ghaziabad and Bulandshahr, including plans to settle pioneers in these areas.

With two pioneers settled in it, **Malihabad** is sure picking up momentum. At this speed it will probably become a B cluster before April and if the momentum can be maintained it should become an A cluster sometime next year. If that happens it would be the fastest transformation from an almost D cluster to an A cluster. Of course you must have noticed there were a few ifs in the last sentence. All these ifs will again depend on another if - that is ***if*** our beloved pioneers decide to continue staying at Malihabad till it becomes able to take care of itself after which they can be allowed to pioneer to another cluster! Hello Anil, Sanjay, did you hear us! Kakori has been closely working with three clusters. Two of them are progressing smoothly. **Unnao Hasanganj** is being frequently visited by the believers in Kakori. Mr. Chedha lal is working closely and systematically with this cluster. What he plans to do is follow the Guidance form the world Center to the letter when doing the Ruhi books. So after book One he made sure almost all the participants conducted devotional meetings, after Ruhi 2 he accompanied the students in home visits and being a quiet observer he let the students do all the talking. All these efforts are slowly bearing fruit. He can see capacity developing in the participants. If things go well this cluster should become an A cluster sometime in 2010. Of course if a dedicated pioneer can be found then it can become an A cluster sometime next year. **Mal** is not moving as fast as these other clusters but the believers in Kakori are making plans for Mal. A few visits have taken place and there is great potential there. This is another cluster that needs a pioneer.

In the clusters around Lucknow, **Fatehpur** is moving ahead by fits and starts. After the stay of believers such as Umesh, Tuhina, Mrs. Kiran, Sudhir and many others this cluster has now a group of human resources, but it needs somebody to stay there for some time and organize these human resources and increase the core activities. Sudhir, Umesh are you listening? Dr. Nicole, Gopal, Seema, Santosh, Raju and many others have been visiting **Barabanki** so often that we are not sure whether we should consider them as part of the Lucknow community or Barabanki community. But we are sure these visits will finally bear fruit and a group will arise in Barabanki. Perhaps more petrol (not to mention sweat) has been spent in going to **Itaunja** than any other cluster. Day after day, week after week believers have gone to this cluster, Sanjeev, Sudhir, Santosh, Nadeem, Sumeet, Raju, Pramod, Hamed are some names that come to mind among those

This flow (of pioneers), moreover, will presage and hasten the advent of the day which, as prophesied by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, will witness the entry by troops of peoples of divers nations and races into the Bahá'í world -- a day which, viewed in its proper perspective, will be the prelude to that long-awaited hour when a mass conversion on the part of these same nations and races, and as a direct result of a chain of events, momentous and possibly catastrophic in nature, and which cannot as yet be even dimly visualized, will suddenly revolutionize the fortunes of the Faith, derange the equilibrium of the world, and reinforce a thousandfold the numerical strength as well as the material power and the spiritual authority of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh."

Shoghi Effendi

who have visited Itaunja. Now what we need to do in these clusters is identify a few believers and bring them to central campaigns for the higher books so that things can move faster. Experience has shown in new clusters at some stage it is important to bring a few believers to a central campaign for higher books where they can be inspired by the spirit of the Faith and make friends with other believers. Once we have this core group they will work with others in the cluster and things will move ahead. Without this close contact somehow things do not move forward in the cluster. So the believers in the seedbed clusters should sit together and decide when a group can be called from all these dependant clusters to one central course in the seedbed clusters.

Among the clusters around Sahar things were moving quite well in **Jalaun,** so there was bound to be some setback and that also took place and the latest reports we have show the cluster is ready for the next advance. Mr. Yogesh needs to be thanked for pioneering to Jalaun.

After the sacrificial pioneering of Taranum to **Chibramau** things started moving ahead. But we now that she has gone back we need someone to take her place. Of course Mr. Uma Shankar is working closely with Chibramau and things are slowly moving ahead, but a pioneer always acts as a catalyst. Mr. Uma Shankar's pioneering in **Tirwa** has proved to be very useful.. The cluster is progressing very well and if everything continues as it is now Tirwa should become an A cluster in a few months' time. Rasoolabad which was till a few months back a C cluster managed to become one of the first A clusters in the region. Now they have themselves become a seedbed cluster and they are planning to develop **Jhinjak.** From the rumours we hear it seems Jhinjak is progressing well, two pioneers have settled in Jhinjak. Mr. Umesh, Mr. Chandan we are waiting for some exciting news from there. At present not much is being done in **Kannauj, Ajit Mal** and **Airwa Khatra**, but Mr. Dreg Pal has his eyes on them, and as soon as the other clusters start rolling smoothly he will look after these clusters. A few visits have been undertaken in these clusters but no systematic action has as yet started.

Kirakat was to look after **Azamgarh.** From what we hear things have started moving in Azamgarh. In fact one of the believers in Azamgarh has gone pioneering to Sararhi. Well done Ved parkash we are proud of you. But once you go back to Azamgarh you should not rest till it becomes an A cluster. Varanasi is working closely with **Sararhi** and from what we hear things are slowly taking shape there.

Banthara had taken up two clusters Unnao Purva and Unna city. At one stage **Unnao Purva** was moving ahead quite well, but as was expected there was a set-back, this has been followed by another wave of activity. The Banthara believers are working closely with this cluster. A pioneer is now settled in Unnao Purva. **Unna city** is blessed to have our dear Pioneer Sandheep over there. He is all alone in a big cluster and has many challenges ahead of him. The Banthara Baha'is have chalked out a plan to assist Sandheep. We are eagerly waiting for the results. We are sure with Sandheep in Unnao city that cluster will grow from strength to strength.

There are a few other C clusters such as **Mau,** which was doing quite well

"The responsibility of the Bahá'ís to teach the Faith is very great. The contraction of the world and the onward rush of events require us to seize every chance open to us to touch the hearts and minds of our fellow men. The Message of Bahá'u'lláh is God's guidance for mankind to overcome the difficulties of this age of transition and move forward into the next stage of its evolution, and human beings have the right to hear it. Those who accept it incur the duty of passing it on to their fellowmen. the slowness of the response of the world has caused and is causing great suffering; hence the historical pressure upon Bahá'ís to exert every effort to teach the Faith for the sake of their fellow men. They should teach with enthusiasm, conviction, wisdom and courtesy, but without pressing their hearer, bearing in mind the Words of Bahá'u'lláh 'Beware lest ye contend with any one, may, strive to make him aware of the truth with kindly manner and most convincing exhortation. If our hearer respond, he will have responded to his own behoof, and if not, turn ye away from him, and set your face towards God's sacred Court, the seat of resplendent holiness,'

till a few cycles back and can do well on its own. With Mr. Anil Singh and his family sitting nicely in Mau this cluster should become and A cluster. The Gorakpur believers have also decided they will become an A cluster this year and act as a seedbed cluster for another cluster such as Aurangabad. On the whole the picture looks pretty good, and if we can somehow manage to increase our tempo we should be able to achieve our goals by the end of the plan.

The B clusters:

We have already discussed **Agra** and **Tirwa** which are doing quite well and should become A clusters in a short period of time. The situation in **Gorakpur** continues to remain 'tense but under control'. We all know what the Gorakpur Baha'is can do. In fact the progress of many clusters such as Kirakat, Rampur etc. is due to the visits of Gorakpur Baha'is. They made a very nice plan during the consultative gathering and if they stick to the plan they can become an A cluster in one cycle. At present they are working on increasing the devotional gatherings and they are getting fairly good results in that. Eventually Gorakpur will become an A cluster. Not just that they will become the centre of activity for many clusters, in fact they will assist many clusters to become A clusters in future.

Rampur is also trying to find ways of increasing the core activities and the human resources. The Baha'is of Rampur have gone pioneering to places such as Chibramau, Kirakat, Kannauj, Barabanki, Unnao city etc. Akash, Sandheep, Taranum, Tabasum, we are proud of you. Now that some of you are back in Rampur make sure that cluster becomes an A cluster. Shahangir was there during the consultative gathering and he had discussions with the Auxiliary Board members and a nice plan was made. Shahangir we are waiting for the results of the plan. Rampur has the capacity to do great things. With so many dedicated families and youth there they can change not only the fortunes of the people around Rampur but the whole state and the whole country.

The A clusters:

Coming to the A clusters we find the clusters are all at different levels of growth, but the good thing is we are all advancing. Leading the city clusters we have **Delhi** whose community has really mastered the art of having successful teaching phases. They are also slowly learning to master the art of consolidation. To make the vast city more manageable they have divided the city into two areas. Each area has its own committee as well as plan. Sometime back they had divided the city into nine sections along nine routes. These routes more or less originated from the temple and covered the whole city. Each area had a team and each Local Assembly member was to work with one route. Each Auxiliary Board member was in charge of three routes The whole thing seems very exciting and all these developments are the beginning steps that will eventually teach us how to handle large numbers. The decentralization of the nineteen day feasts has gone a long way in bringing vitality to the community life. As these neighbourhood feasts increase we are bound to see the Baha'i community develop and take shape.

Among the other city clusters **Lucknow, Varanasi**, and **Kanpur** are

"Consolidation is as vital a part of the teaching work as expansion. It is that aspect of teaching which assists the believers to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the Teachings, and fans the flame of their devotion of Bahá'u'lláh and His Cause, so that they will, of their own volition, continue the process of their spiritual development, promote the teaching work, and strengthen the functioning of their administrative institutions. Proper consolidation is essential to the preservation of the spiritual health of the 594 community, to the protection of its interests, to the upholding of its good name, and ultimately to the continuation of the work of expansion itself."

Compilations,
Lights of Guidance

Slowly learning to handle matters. The core activities in Lucknow had gone down but they have crossed the low ebb and things are suddenly picking up momentum. Kanpur had its share of problems. The Baha'i house was robbed twice. The door of the Baha'i house was broken a lot of damage was done and frankly speaking this all proved to be very good for the community. If you ask us the whole thing was Godsend. The Baha'is got together, collected a lot of money, repaired the Baha'i house, and suddenly you can see the old enthusiasm back in the believers. Varanasi is also doing well. With believers such as Martha, Suchit, Pooja and many, many other devoted and active believers it is obvious Varanasi will go a long way.

Among the Rural clusters it is not easy to say who is leading the way. **Kakori** is leading in terms of Junior youth classes. Last we heard there were 36 classes. One thing we all want to know is when they will cross the 50 mark. Let us make a prophecy– hm… December. Mr. Ram Bilas are you hearing us? Experience has shown once a core activity crosses thirty or thirty five in a cluster, it suddenly becomes difficult to increase it unless the coordinator or the facilitator learn to use other methods than simple visits. The coordinator needs to use the phone more often, send other people to assist the animators, make detailed plans on how to visit the animators so that the maximum number can be visited on a single day, so on and so forth. But really Kakori needs to be congratulated on their achievement. Since Mrs. Neelam has taken over as coordinator for Children classes we see an increase in that activity as well. Every month there is a slight increase in the number. Last we heard there were 28, what it is 30 now. All right here is a challenge for Mrs. Neelam can you raise the number of children classes to 40 before December?

Bidhuna, Sahar, and Rasoolabad are suddenly on fire. We hear of core activities increasing day after day. Just the other day we were having a telephonic discussion and I was told how there is a sudden spurt in the number of children classes and study circles. We would really like to thank all the Baha'is who are working to increase the core activities. No mention of Bidhinu would be complete without mentioning the sacrificial efforts of Mr. Dreg Pal. Riding on his motorcycle from cluster to cluster, encouraging everyone, facing challenges head on and with a smiling face, we are really proud of you, keep up the good work you are doing. By the way If any of you ever receive a phone call after 2,.00 am, do not panic. It is just Mr. Dreg Pal with a new idea or simply sending in his report.

Banthara was leading all the other clusters in terms of devotional gatherings, but somehow the numbers have gone down. Mr. Shatrughan Verma we hope you have not forgotten your goal of 70 devotional meetings. The other core activities are all picking momentum. There are wonderful youth in this cluster and the day they decide they can lead all the other clusters. Banthara has many unique capacities. They have the best song group in the state, they have believers who are expert puppeteers. They have wonderful speakers who can inspire any group of people to recognize Baha'u'llah. All they need to do is focus on increasing the core activities.

Kirakat is also doing well and we hear from Mr. Manmath who has been steadfastly pioneering in this cluster that the activities are increasing.

That more or less covers all our clusters. Now you can see why we are so optimistic that the goals can be achieved. All we need to do is work a little harder, sacrifice a bit more, assist more people to arise and we shall achieve our goals.

The task that remains to be accomplished is indeed colossal. The distractions, temptations, and pitfalls that might interfere with its consummation are many and varied. … The blessings from on high, ready to be showered upon them, are more than adequate to ensure their complete and total victory. So much hangs on the fortunes of the present Plan! So much must necessarily depend on the manner and the spirit in which they discharge their terrific responsibilities, during the few fleeting months still allotted them ere the expiry of the Plan

Shoghi Effendi

THE FIRST MOVEMENT

Going through the sequence of courses

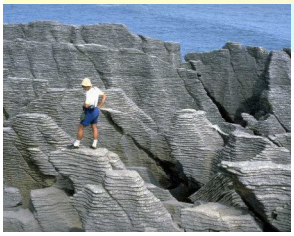
In the past few months we have seen increased activity as far as the training process is concerned. Our Regional Coordinator, Mr. Prem Singh has been running all around the region trying to mobilize the believers to increase the study circles. The institute Board has been meeting more often than ever. They have had some late night meetings. A comparative study from April To September shows we have been doing better than last year (except in books 1 and 7). This has been more or less the trend with the institute activities. Every year we see an increase in activities. In the

past the major focus of the institute Board was on institute campaigns as we needed to push things ahead. Slowly we need to learn to focus more on study circles. Of course institute campaigns will continue to be an important line of activity, but this should go hand in hand with the strengthening of the study circles. One positive aspect that we are witnessing is the emphasis on the service component of the books. More and more tutors are learning to make sure the students are trained in the service components of the books. In the long run we finally have to learn that it is no use having a study circle for book three if it does not result in an increase in the number of children classes or a training of book five which is not followed by an increase in the number of Junior youth classes. Human resources able to shoulder the responsibilities of the cluster need to be created. This puts a great responsibility on the institute Board, the cluster coordinators and the tutors. But we are happy to see our army of trainers are doing a wonderful job as far as training is concerned. All we need to do now is increase our tempo.

	R1		R2		R3		R4		R5		R6		R7	
	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007	2008	2007
April	17	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
May	129	78	107	53	44	20	51	10	23	40	35	0	4	35
June	96	148	71	108	100	92	30	59	24	7	11	45	21	18
July	17	43	7	14	10	9	11	0	15	0	8	0	7	0
Au-	17	86	27	1	33	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	7
Sep-	34	68	15	24	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
	310	433	227	200	191	121	93	76	62	47	54	45	32	68

A chaotic international society, torn by conflicting perceptions and interests, is assailed by rising terrorism, lawlessness and corruption, and eroded by economic failure, poverty and disease. In its midst the Bahá'í community is becoming increasingly visible, inspired by a divinely revealed vision, building on solid foundations, growing in strength through the processes that are now in place, and undaunted by seeming setbacks

The Universal House of Justice



Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment Program

The Junior Youth Empowerment Program has been moving ahead from strength to strength. There was a very successful training program held in Bihar Sharif. Some of the friends from Uttar Pradesh attended the training program. Mr. Ram Vilas and Miss Martha Merchant not only attended the program but they also made certain plans for the different clusters in the region. According to the plan there is going to be a multiplication of Junior youth groups in most advanced clusters.

After coming back they have been working hard to get things moving. There has been several training programs for animators. More than twenty people attended the program at Lucknow which was conducted by Miss Martha Merchant. Judging by how things are going on we feel there is going to be a sudden spurt in the number of Junior youth classes. We are already witnessing the first signs of the increase in the number of Junior youth classes. We hear of such increase from different clusters for example Banthara has gone up to 14 from 4, Lucknow has gone up to ten from five. Kakori is always moving ahead anyway. In the region we now have 112 classes as compared to 98 last month. If this process continues we would have laid a solid foundation for entry by troops in the years to come.

It would be good if each coordinator for Junior youth activities sets a goal for himself. In the beginning the goal would of course depend on the number of human resources available. Thus for example the coordinator for Junior youth may decide that at least seventy percent of those who have done Ruhi 5 should conduct classes. The animator can pick up the list of those who have been trained in book 5, after saying a lot of prayers for assistance pay them a visit and encourage them to start a Junior youth class. Or maybe even call them to a refresher course, or an animator encounter and there encourage them to start a Junior Youth Group. Once this goal is achieved, then the coordinator should have a goal of having at least twenty or twenty five groups in the first level of the course. This may of course mean having a campaign for book five. Then the next goal may be having twenty five groups in the first level and twenty five groups in the second level. So those who were doing the first level books now continue with their animators but they now do books of the second level. The coordinator trains thirty five new people so that twenty five of them can conduct the first level books. After another year as the students move up the coordinator can add another group of twenty-five classes. Once this goal is achieved the old students move up and start attending study circles and the old animators can start with a new group of students. This should be the goal of a Junior youth coordinator—working closely with sixty to seventy five groups in a cluster. It may sound difficult, but in fact it has been done. As a rule Junior youth are quite enthusiastic and love to come for Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment classes. In less advanced A clusters a Junior youth coordinator should really make one month programs for himself and set goals in such a way that in two or maximum three months he achieves the first level of activity, that is 25 Junior youth classes. In more advanced clusters the coordinator should try to train the animators who are conducting classes to take their students to the higher level, while he works with twenty or twenty five new animators.

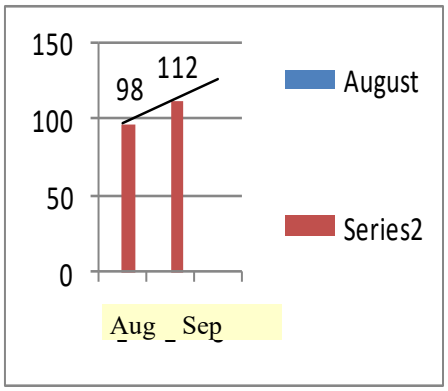
In clusters where more than this number is needed a second coordinator may be needed.

O thou spiritual lad!

May God uphold thee and edify thee in the flower of thy youth and in the spring-time of thy life and may He illumine thy face with the lights of advancement unto God and turning unto the Kingdom of God. If thou become firm and steadfast in the love of God, thou shalt be confirmed with a confirmation whereby thy face will be gladdened, thy heart rejoiced and all thy family will be happy and pleased. Therefore, confine thy thoughts and ideas in turning to God and submitting 60 unto Him and chant the signs (verses) of thanks and praise for that by reason of which He hath strengthened thee to attain this great gift. ..

Abdu'l-Baha,

The success or the failure of the next five year plan and the plans to come after that will finally depend on what our animators achieve in this plan. What our animators achieve will depend on how the cluster coordinators for Junior youth go about fulfilling their duties. Frankly speaking the whole plan to advance the process entry by troops depends to a large extent upon the coordinators for Junior youth classes. Do you want to see entry by troops in your cluster in the years to come? If you do -now is the time for planting the seeds. You will witness the harvest of your efforts in the years to come in proportion to the way you plant the seeds now.



Number of JYSEP in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Uttarakhand

S. No	NAME OF CLUSTER	Number of JYSEP groups and participants in	NO. OF JUNIOR GROUPS in September	NO. OF BAHA'IS IN JUNIOR GROUPS	NO. OF SEEKERS IN JUNIOR GROUPS	TOTAL NO. OF PARTICIPANTS
1	Kakori	34/404	36	143	393	536
2	Banthra	4/157	14	36	108	144
3	Lucknow	7/49	10	6	67	72
4	Sahar	2/19	5	32	20	52
5	Bidhuna	1/13	3	10	26	36
6	Rasoolabad	7/65	4	12	26	38
7	Tirwa	8/155	6	75	30	105
8	Sarhari	0	2	15	10	25
9	Varanasi	2/13	7	8	46	54
10	Dehradun	1/6	1	1	5	6
11	Agra	0	4	3	36	39
12	Barabanki	1/9	2	5	17	
13	Delhi	19/198	10	21	89	110
14	Gorakpur	1/12				
15	Itaunja	0	1	2	5	7
16	Kanpur					
17	Kathor					
18	Kirakat	3/28	3	0	27	27
19	Malihabad	1/18	3	14	21	35
20	Rampur	6/66	0	0	0	0
21	Unnao City	1/4	1	0	6	6
22	Unnao Hasangar		0	0	0	0
TOTAL NUMBER		**98/1216**	**112**	**383**	**932**	**1253**

BAHA'I CHILDREN CLASSES

We all know one of the greatest services we can render is the education of children. Many dedicated believers are rendering this wonderful service. We should remember that having a Junior youth group or conducting a children class is not just spending a few hours time with a group of children. We are really putting down the foundation for the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth.

The children and Junior youth of today will be the leaders and administrators of tomorrow. If we can take fifty thousand children in the state through children classes, Junior youth classes and study circles we would have prepared a solid foundation for the establishment of God's Kingdom. These children would not only fulfill their own spiritual duty but also bring a radical change in society. But all this can happen if our teachers arise today and train these children to live their lives in the way God wants them.

The number of children classes in the state is gradually increasing. This inspite of the fact that we are more focussed on junior youth classes and study circles, trying to increase those numbers first so that children classes do not get the attention they deserve.

As in other activities the final responsibility of increasing the number and quality of children classes lies on the shoulders of the Coordinator. A new A cluster should have at least a minimum of twenty to twenty-five children classes. If the number of children classes in a cluster is less than this then the Coordinator should take steps to increase the classes. In the second year these twenty classes need to go to a higher level with their teacher and twenty new classes need to be started. This process should continue for another year when the children are ready to study Junior Youth books and the teachers can work with a new group of students.

Finally Baha'is will need to be able to influence society. This influence will depend on two things. The way we practice the teachings in our lives and the percentage of people who practice the teachings in their lives. There is a critical percentage which when reached can completely change the face of the cluster as a whole. We really don't have the statistics on that but probably if we have four to five percent of a population trying to live the Baha'i life, they will be able to completely transform the whole cluster. To reach to this target of five percent we really need to work hard. We need to focus in increasing our core activities and systematizing them. Now is the time to train the next generation so that the world does not have to go through the problems our generation faces.

The statistics show that in the last quarter children classes were held in 24 clusters. There were 152 children classes with 1735 participants.

As we see the progress in the clusters we realize that things come down to one point—are we able to supply the increasing need for human resources as the cluster advances? All the efforts in a cluster come to a standstill if we do not create the human resources needed to sustain the activities. Experience has shown that an average A cluster as of now

Among the greatest of all great services is the education of children,

Abdul-Baha

You Bahá'í children and young people have both great privileges and great obligations ahead of you, for your generation will be the ones to help build up a new, better and more beautiful world ... You should prepare yourselves for this great task by trying to grasp the true meaning of the teachings and not just merely accepting them as something you are taught. They are like a wonderful new world of thought just beginning to be explored, and when we realize that Bahá'u'lláh has brought teachings and laws for a thousand years to come, we can readily see that each new generation may find some greater meaning in the writings than the ones gone before did.

Compilation of compilations

S. No	Name of Cluster	Children Classes		
		Number of classes	Baha'i participants	Participants of friends of Baha'is
1	Agra	7	3	43
2	Banthra	13	25	150
3	Bidhuna	11	48	81
4	Barabanki	1	16	8
5	Chhibramau	3	17	13
6	Dehradun	1	4	3
7	Delhi	16	13	200
8	Fatehpur	1	0	6
9	Ghaziabad	0	0	0
10	Gorakhpur	1	4	7
12	Itaunja	1	4	14
12	Jalaun	2	11	12
13	Jhinjak	1	1	14
14	Kakori	30	92	212
15	Kanpur	1	0	12
16	Kirakat	10	11	84
17	Lucknow	4	0	43
18	Rasoolabad	8	21	75
19	Sahar	16	71	96
20	Sararhi	2	0	35
21	Tirwa	12	109	65
22	Unnao City	1	5	0
232	Hasanganj	1	16	8
24	Varanasi	9	6	77
Total		**152**	**477**	**1258**

Certainly, certainly, neglect not the education of the children. Rear them to be possessed of spiritual qualities, and be assured of the gifts and favours of the Lord.

(Compilations, The Compilation of Compilations vol. I, p. 374)

These children are even as young plants, and teaching them the prayers is as letting the rain pour down upon them...

Abdu'l-Baha

STUDY CIRCLES

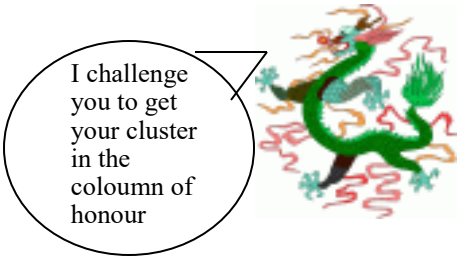
S. No	Name of Cluster	Study Circle		
		No.	Baha'is	Seekers
1	Agra	2	30	0
2	Banthra	9	28	60
3	Bidhuna	7	25	61
4	Barabanki	1	8	6
5	Chhibramau	2	7	13
6	Dehradun	1	3	3
7	Delhi	21	76	28
8	Fatehpur	1	8	0
9	Gorakhpur	1	5	0
10	Itaunja	1	2	6
11	Jalaun	2	12	
12	Jhinjak	1	7	0
13	Kakori	3	25	1
14	Kanpur	2	2	3
15	Kirakat	4	21	0
16	Lucknow	5	10	16
17	Malihabad	3	15	9
18	Rasoolabad	6	21	29
19	Sahar	8	58	33
20	Sararhi	2	18	18
21	Tirwa	7	50	27
22	Hasanganj	2	11	6
Total		**91**	**442**	**319**

would require a minimum of fifteen to twenty actively functioning study circles. This is really the bare minimum. More advanced clusters such as Delhi and Kakori would need much more than this. But fifteen to twenty may be considered as our minimum requirement for an A cluster. Every coordinator should have this number in front of himself or herself. If you see in your cluster you are having fifteen to twenty actively functioning study circles you should be happy. If not you should fix a date for yourself when you feel you will achieve this number and then make plans to achieve your goal.

Some clusters have seen a greater increase in activities than others. Thus for example we hear of sudden increase in study circles in Sahar, Bidhuna, and Banthara. Jhinjak is having its first study circle. In other areas the number of study circles has reached a plateau and it is not increasing. It is all right if the plateau is around 15 to 20 study circles but if it is less than that then action needs to be taken. The cluster coordinators have a great role to play in increasing the number of study circles. The visits and the encouragement of the cluster coordinator can increase the number of this very important activity.

On the whole there has been a drop in the number of study circles, this drop has been mostly due to fall in numbers of study circles in two cluster. But the number of clusters having study circles is increasing. Last year there were 16 clusters having study circles. In last to last cycle there were 19 clusters having study circles. In the last cycle there were 22 clusters having study circles.

After three months the next issue of cluster Reporter will come out. We are going to have a special coloumn of honour for A clusters that manage to increase their study circles to 15. For B clusters the number is 10 and for C clusters 5. Let us see how many coordinators can bring their cluster in the coloumn of honour.



DEVOTIONAL GATHERINGS

One activity which we feel has been under-utilized is the devotional meeting. Among the core activities it is the easiest to organize and one of the best ways of reaching to seekers. In the spiritually uplifting atmosphere of the devotional meeting as seekers come in contact with the Word of God spiritual susceptibilities get awakened that will later enable them to accept Baha'u'llah as the Manifestation of God for this age.

	Name of Cluster	Devotinal Meetings		
		E	B	S
1	Agra	3	8	56
2	Banthra	21	222	110
3	Bhartana	0	0	0
4	Bidhuna	32	273	216
5	Barabanki	1	10	8
6	Chhibramau	4	12	34
7	Dehradun	4	15	26
8	Delhi	28	90	120
9	Fatehpur	1	15	30
10	Gorakhpur	3	5	7
11	Harak	0	0	0
12	Itaunja	5	2	18
13	Jaunpur	0	0	
14	Jalaun	5	26	32
15	Jhinjak	5	26	201
16	Kakori	21	267	183
17	Khairgarh	1	36	0
18	Kirakat	32	4	214
19	Lucknow	19	55	75
20	Malihabad	13	120	124
21	Rasoolabad	28	309	172
22	Sahar	40	307	192
23	Tirwa	17	175	88
24	Hasanganj	2	20	10
25	Unnao Purva	1	10	70
26	Varanasi	2	7	7
	Total	**288**	**2014**	**1993**

In the last meeting of the RBC it was decided that we try to have one teaching phase through devotional meetings and see the effect. The idea is that suppose we want to have a hundred new believers in one cycle. Then what we do is we arrange our devotional meetings in such a way that we have around two hundred and fifty seekers in them. We achieve this number in the consolidation phase. During the teaching phase we approach these people and teach them either through Anna's presentation or any other direct teaching method that we are comfortable with, but making sure the main themes in Anna's presentation are covered. Considering that in each cluster we have a good number of Ruhi 1 graduates who if encouraged are ready to hold Devotional meetings we should be able to achieve a large percentage of our teaching goals through devotional meetings. The Regional Baha'i Council is working on making invitation letters as well as prayer cards for these Devotional meetings. In places where receptive populations reside plans can be made with the people there to start these devotional meetings. One method that can be used is visiting these receptive populations and inviting a group of them to come and learn Baha'i prayers. Once this group learns prayers they can start devotional meetings in their area. Later they can do Ruhi one. We would like to request all clusters to try this method for one cycle. During the month of November and December we all concentrate on increasing the number of Devotional Gatherings and the number of seekers in these gatherings. Then in the Cycle starting in January we can start direct teaching and see the result of our efforts. During the forthcoming Regional conference this issue will be discussed and we hope you will put whatever decisions are taken into action. In the last month we had devotional meetings in 26 clusters. But some clusters which usually have devotional meetings did not have it last month. So in reality more than 30 clusters have devotional gatherings.

Annual Report– 2007-08

The Cluster Reporter was almost ready when we realized this year the Regional Conference will be held earlier than usual. It was felt there was no point having a separate annual report as the Cluster Reporter anyway brings us up to date with our present position. So the Regional Baha'i Council has decided to combine the Annual Report with the Cluster Reporter. The first part of the Magazine dealt with our present status and our progress in the last quarter. The rest of the magazine deals with the reports for the period of one year.

PIONEERS—THE QUICKENERS OF MANKIND

As you remember in our last Annual report we had raised the call for twenty two pioneers to arise and settle for shorter or longer duration in different clusters. Many responded to our call and we are really grateful to these heroes and heroines. In fact the response of the believers was beyond our expectations. Of course some went for short periods but most stayed for more than six months. Among those who are still in their pioneering posts we would like to thank Mr. **Ashok Soni** who is pioneering in Dehradun, , Mr. **Sanjay** and Mr. **Anil** who are in Mal, Mr. **Anil** (No. 2) who has just gone to Unnao Purva, Mr. **Yogesh** in Jalaun, Mr. **Umesh** and Mr. **Chandan** In Jhinjak, Miss. **Neeru** in Agra, Mr. **Ved Parkash** in Sararhi, Mr. **Uma Shankar** in Tirwa, Mr. **Sandeep** in Unnao city. We would also like to thank other pioneers who stayed in different clusters for different periods of time last year. We had Mr. **Saroj** in Kirakat, Miss **Tabasum** in Kirakat, Miss. **Taranum** in Chibramau, **Pinki** and **Anita** in Rampur, Mr. **Vishram** and **Akash** in Kannauj, **Tuhina** and **Umesh** in Fatehpur, **Alok** in Mau, Mr. **Sandeep Singh** in Barabanki. Our veteran pioneers Mr. **Manmath** and Mr. **Bhargava** and family continue steadfastly in their services. We would also like to thank others whose names are not mentioned but who tried to pioneer but due to some or the other reason could not continue for long. Don't worry try again this year and we are sure you will succeed. Nidhi and others are you listening.

We are really inspired by the actions of our beloved pioneers. They have faced all challenges with a smiling face, from mosquito bites, to monkey bites, from rude neighbours to police stations, from accidents to drowning, nothing has deterred our heroes from bringing in victory after victory. Looking at the remaining goals we feel this year we need a bigger army of pioneers. There are already twelve pioneers serving different clusters at present but to achieve our goals we need at least another twenty five pioneers. This is because when a pioneer returns home the next pioneer should be ready to immediately take his or her place. Again some clusters need more than one pioneer. So are the heroes and heroines ready for pioneering this year? Apart from this army of pioneers we need others who can go for shorter periods maybe one month or so, or even two or three weeks. Please give us your names and the dates you are free so that we can arrange programs for you. It is finally this movement of pioneers and travel teachers that is going to bring in the victory. Let us keep these words of Baha'u'llah in our hearts this year -

The movement itself from place to place when undertaken for the sake of God hath always exerted, and can now exert, its influence in the world. In the Books of old the station of them that have voyaged far and near in order to guide the servants of God hath been set forth and written down.

"If my health were good at present, I would not wait one day longer. I would go ... to all parts of the world to cry and call out. Had I been free during the forty years of my imprisonment in 'Akka, I would have traveled to the East, West, North and South of the world. I would not have kept still for one minute...

'Abdu'l-Baha

"Oh! that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions and raising the call of Ya Bahá'u'l-Abha in cities, villages, mountains, deserts, and oceans, promote the Divine Teachings! This, alas, I cannot do! How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it."

'Abdu'l-Baha

All must participate (in pioneering), however humble their origin, however limited their experience, however restricted their means, however deficient their education, however pressing their cares and preoccupations, however unfavorable the environment in which they live

Shoghi effendi

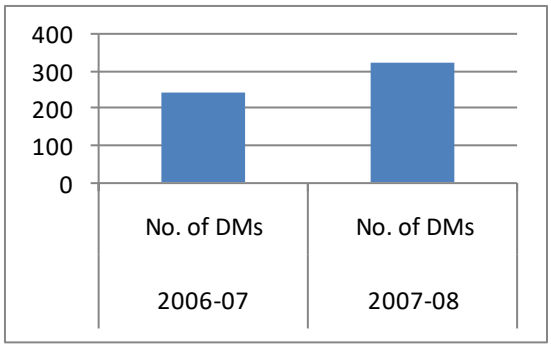
ANNUAL REPORT– 2007-08

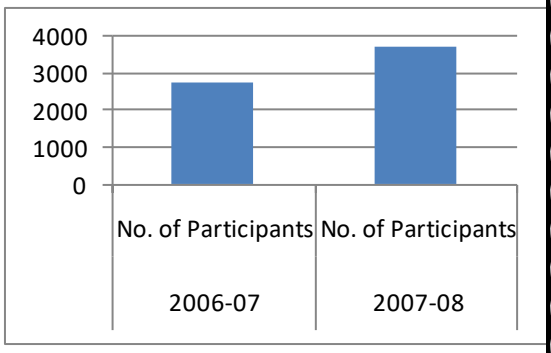
MULTIPLICATION OF CORE ACTIVITIES

On the whole this year has been a very good year we have seen a definite increase in the core activities. Of course every year we have our ups and downs, but as long as our ups are more than the ups last year and our downs are higher than the downs last year we can say we are progressing. In the following pages we will only compare the statistics of the last two years. The numbers compare the highest level of an activity reached during a quarter this year as compared to the highest number of the activity last year. Whatever we had to say regarding these activities has been covered in the first part of this report so only the statistical information will be discussed here.

Devotional meetings

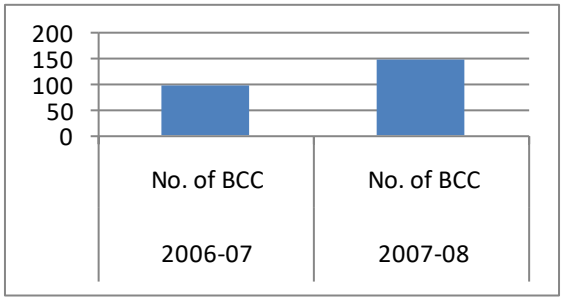
We have seen an increase in the number of devotional meetings as well as in the number of participants in these gatherings. The highest we reached last year was 244 devotional meetings with 2753 participants. The highest we have reached this year has been 326 participants with 3322 participants. The highest number of participants in one month has been 3756, this inspite of the fact that in that month the number of devotional meetings had actually gone down. On the whole there has been a 33 percent increase in the number of devotional meetings and a 36 percent increase in the number of participants in these devotional gatherings.

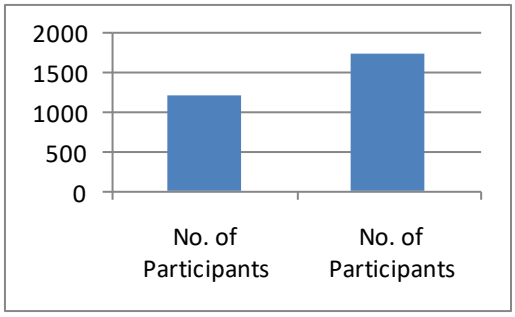




Baha'i children classes

The number of children classes has also witnessed a good increase this year. Last year we had mentioned 99 children classes and 1224 participants. This year we have as of





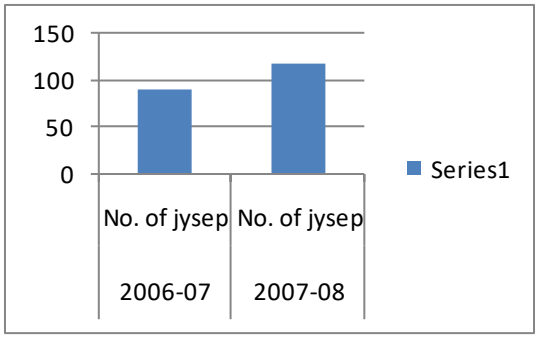
Movement of the cluster toward the next stage of development is directly associated with "the multiplication of study circles, devotional meetings and children's classes, and the expansion they engender." As the pool of trained human resources grows, an increase in these and other activities occurs naturally. As indicated, the attention given in the past two years to training more tutors has had a measurable impact on the number of study circles worldwide

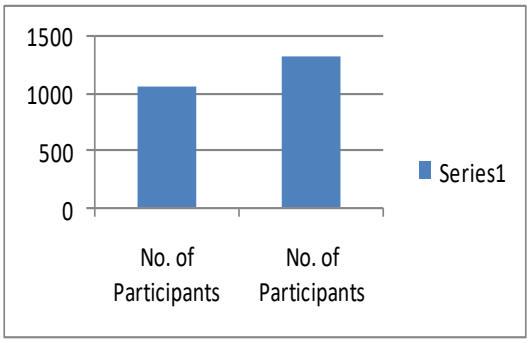
Building Momentum

now 144 children classes with 1739 participants. This shows an increase of 49 percent in the number of children classes and an increase of 42 percent in the number of participants. On the whole we can be happy with this increase. Of course we should not forget that we still have a large number of trained BCC teachers who are not taking classes imagine what will happen if seventy percent of our trained teachers start taking classes. We would have something like eight hundred children classes. That would really ensure victory by troops in a few years time.

Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment Programme

The number of Junior youth empowerment classes has also witnessed an increase. There has been an increase of thirty percent in the number of classes and 26 percent in the number of participants. Although these numbers are impressive but from what we are seeing we feel it is nothing compared to what is going to happen in the months to come. There is a concentrated and systematic approach being applied by Miss Martha, Mr. Ram Vilash





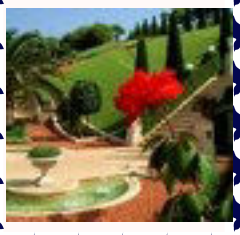
and others which we feel will soon double or triple our Junior youth classes.

Study circles

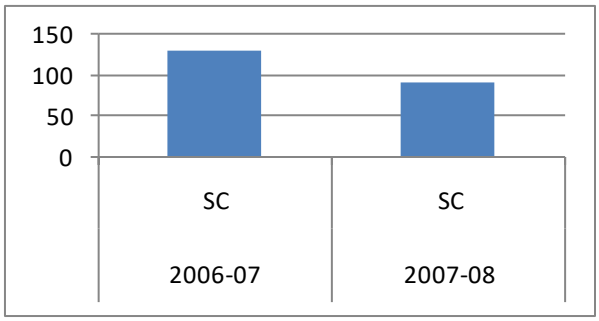
There has been a slight decline in the number of study circles. This decline is really due to a sudden fall in numbers in two clusters. One cluster has gone down to three study circles from twenty four and another to twenty one from thirty six. Still a fall in the number of study circles is something that should make every tutor and coordinator worried. The Regional coordinator has been travelling from cluster to cluster trying to increase the number of study circles. These efforts are bound to give results sooner or later. But we should try to understand the urgency of the times we live in. We should remember that after twelve years of intense effort we have only 489 tutors, but in the coming two and a half years we need at least a thousand more tutors. This is a challenge before every tutor. Every tutor who is able to should start a study circle and assist in the creation of human resources. There is really no time to loose and the challenge before the coordinators and tutors is immense. We would like to request all tutors to start their own study circles this year. We would specially like to request those who are in seedbed clusters to start a study circle in a dependant cluster. This is probably one of the greatest services we can render this year.

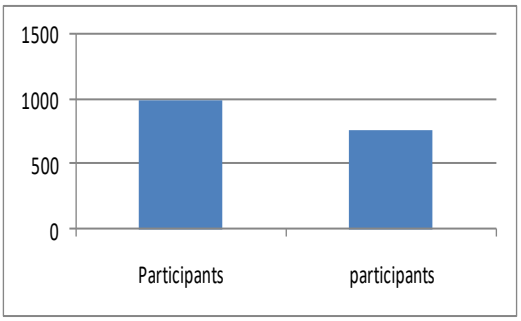
If only the friends could realize it, the glory of our Faith is not that people with unique abilities do the work of the Cause, but that it is done by the sacrifice of loving and devoted souls who arise selflessly to undertake work they feel themselves incompetent, sometimes, to achieve. God works through them and endows them with gifts they did not dream they could ever possess.

Shoghi Effendi



ANNUAL REPORT– 2007-08



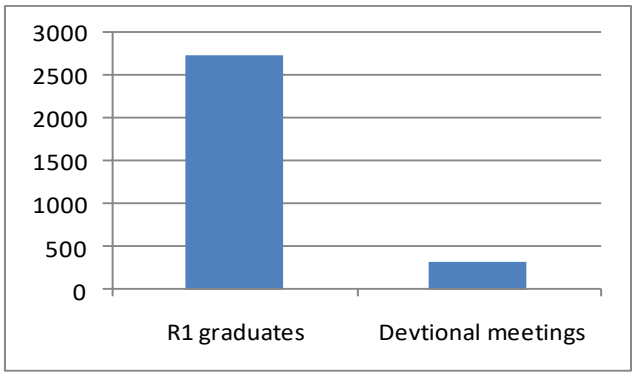


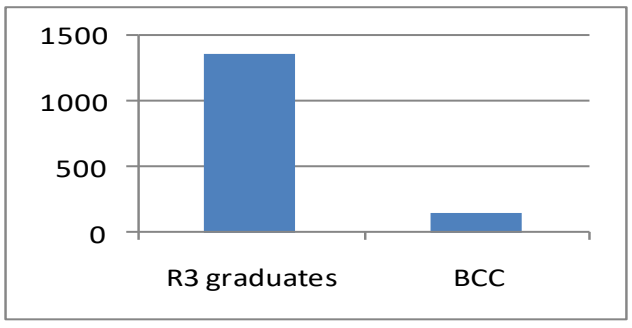
Although there is a slight decline in the number of study circles, the training of human resources continues. There have been twenty eight institute campaigns that have produced a new group of human resources. The good thing about the present campaigns is that great emphasis is being laid on the practice component of the books. This is one factor that will go a long way in changing the shape of our clusters. The number of new human resources can be gauged from the chart below:

	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
Oct-07	4092	1490	1441	764	403	526	420
Oct-08	4956	1837	1680	842	456	601	489
Increase in No.	864	347	239	78	53	75	69
% increase	21.11437	23.28859	16.5857	10.20942	13.15136	14.25856	16.42857

Utilizing our human resources

Training human resources is one side of the story, utilizing these human resources we have is another side. A look at our statistics shows when it comes to the utilization of human resources we have to work harder. A look at our devotional meetings shows that only 12 percent of Baha'is who have done Ruhi 1 are conducting regular devotional meetings. The minimum target for a facilitator should be to ensure that at least twenty to twenty five percent of those who have done Ruhi 1 conduct devotional meetings. The percentage of those who have done Ruhi 3 and are taking children classes has improved from last year. Last year around 6.8 percent of those who had done Ruhi 3 were conducting classes, this year the number has gone up to eleven percent. Out of the 1362 Baha'is (in this analysis we are calculating only the number of Baha'is who have been trained and have excluded the seekers) who have done Ruhi 3 if we remove the five





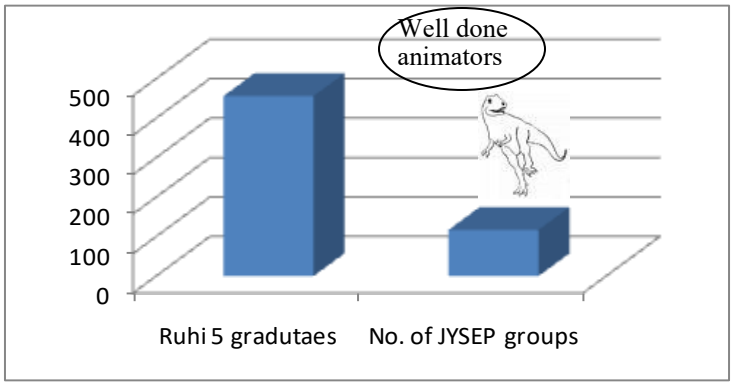
Today the need is so great on the part of humanity to hear of the Divine Message, that the believers must plunge into the work, wherever and however they can, heedless of their own shortcomings

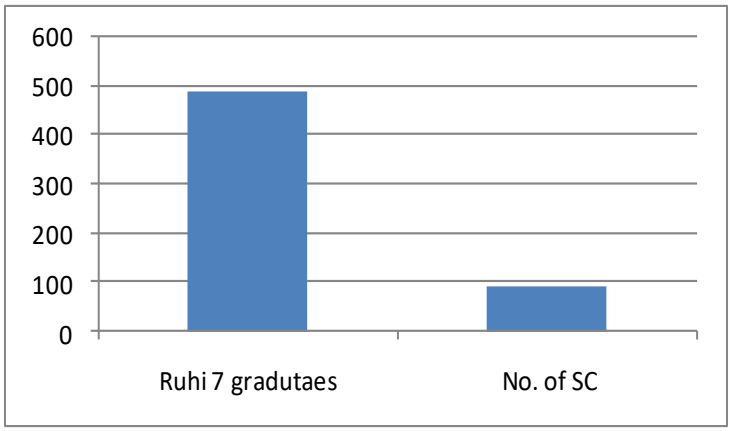
Victory Promises

have a perfect reliance upon God; let your heart burn with the desire to serve His Mission and proclaim His call; and you will observe how eloquence and the power to change human hearts will come as a matter of course.

Victory Promises

hundred that have gone to the higher books we still have around eight hundred believers in this group. A children class coordinator should look at those who have done Ruhi three and see how many of them can be encouraged to start their own children classes. A coordinator should consider anything less than thirty five to forty percent human resources holding classes as unsatisfactory.
This year again the animators have done very well. 25.6 percent of those who have done book 5 are conducting Junior youth classes. Last year it was 22 percent, so we have seen an increase here as well. If another fifteen to twenty percent can be added to this group the Junior youth coordinators can really congratulate themselves.





When it comes to study circles 18.6 percent of those who have done Ruhi 7 are holding study circles. This is something that should make us worried. A lot of time and energy goes into making a tutor. It is important these tutors are encouraged to utilize their training for the betterment of the world. A cluster coordinator should really be worried if less than seventy percent of tutors are actively involved in activities.

The facilitators and coordinators should really look at their responsibilities with a new vision. The following quotation from His Holiness the Bab should be our guide—

It is better to guide one soul than to possess all that is on earth, for as long as that guided soul is under the shadow of the Tree of Divine Unity, he and the one who hath guided him will both be recipients of God's tender mercy, whereas possession of earthly things will cease at the time of death. The path to guidance is one of love and compassion, not of force and coercion. This hath been God's method in the past, and shall continue to be in the future!

(Compilations, Quickeners of Mankind, p. 76)

If the facilitators and coordinators can assist the believers to arise and start core activities they will become the recipients of God's tender mercy, and this is something that will remain with us in all the worlds of God. What greater bounty than this. Friends from now on let us look at our duties with this new vision. We want to enable our believers to receive God's tender mercies. Let us not take our responsibility lightly. Let us keep personal goals for ourselves. Let us ask this question from ourselves every day. How many souls am I going to assist to walk on the path of service? The institutions should also keep this in mind. In the final analysis encouraging human resources to arise to serve is the duty of the institutions. The members of the institutions should look at how the human resources in the cluster are being utilized and make programmes to ensure maximum utilization of human resources. Let us arise this year and make sure more and more of our trained believers arise on the path of service.

At this time and at this period we must avail ourselves of this most great opportunity. We must not sit inactive for one moment; we must sever ourselves from composure, rest, tranquility, goods, property, life and attachment to material things. We must sacrifice everything to His Highness, the Possessor of existence...

Quickeners of Mankind, p. 13)

Influencing the life of society around us

One of the lines of action that we need to now focus on is becoming more involved in the life of society around us. As Baha'is most of us are closely involved in the life of society. Every children class, every Junior Youth class and other such activities that we undertake go a long way in making the society and the world a better place to live in. A Junior Youth Spiritual Empowerment class not only empowers the junior youth to develop certain qualities and skills but it inculcates in them certain traits that will enable them to become successful citizens both materially and spiritually. There are many believers who are working hard to make the world a better place. Here we will narrate the stories of some believers in our region who were involved in the life of society last year.

Arising to the need:

We sometimes think of influencing society in terms of socio-economic projects that are complex and need a lot of planning. But in reality influencing society starts with simple acts of service that we undertake to help others and the society we live in. We see someone or a group of people in our society faced with a problem and we know we have the answer to that problem in the teachings of Baha'u'llah if we go out of our way and try to assist others to solve the social or individual problems people face by using Baha'i principles we can say we are actively involved in the life of society around us.

One of the Baha'i women in a rural cluster had a neighbor who was always unhappy. They could hear continuous arguing and fighting from that family. This lady went and talked to the ladies of that family and offered to assist them overcome their problems. She studied with them the book making of a Baha'i home and taught them how to use consultation to solve their problems. Slowly the attitude of this family changed and they have stopped fighting and being depressed. They are very grateful to this lady for her assistance.

This is a very good example of what we should all do. If we see a problem somewhere we should not just ignore it and say this is none of our business we should go out of our way to solve that problem. There may be a slum near our house where the children do not go to school, we can go and encourage them to go to school or even arrange to start a literacy class for them. Some of the youth in Lucknow went to a slum to start a junior youth class. But they found most of the junior youth were illiterate. Instead of starting just a junior youth class they started a literacy class as well as a junior youth class. Almost twenty children used to come to the literacy class. Four to five of them continued regularly and have learnt reading and writing so well that they can now do junior youth classes.

Environment is another thing which should be in our thoughts. There was a useless plot of land lying in an area of Lucknow, which had almost become a dumping ground and a breeding place for mosquitoes. Some of the neighbours among whom one of the most active was a Baha'i got together and decided to do something about the piece of land. They called a meeting and gathered all the neighbours and discussed with them as to what should be done with the piece of land. After consulting together they decided to change that land into a park. Today that piece of useless land is a beautiful park. These people later undertook other environmental activities.

In the Bahá'í view, man is neither a fallen creature nor merely the product of socio-economic forces. The rational soul, in the Bahá'í view, is a phenomenon with limitless potentialities: intellectual, spiritual, emotional and moral. Service to humanity is among the primary influences unlocking individual capacity.

We believe that education in the principle of service to humanity will arouse and maintain motivation which, coupled with the acquisition of practical skills and technology, will open as yet unimagined possibilities for development within and among nations.

Moreover, the Bahá'í International Community believes that it is especially important to promote participation among groups which have traditionally been oppressed or neglected, such as indigenous peoples and women, so that they can assume their legitimate role in making decisions about development which directly affect them.

Fostering a genuine belief in the oneness of humanity, an awareness of global interdependence, and a moral commitment to service, in both developing and developed countries, is indispensable to the process of development.

BIC

Annual Report– 2007-08

At present for most of our efforts in influencing society will be through simple acts of service. Others will be able to contribute in greater ways. Here we have the story of two believers in their own words.

Baha'i Schools

Before becoming a Baha'i I always used to think as to how I could change the condition of my village, how could I remove the disunity prevailing in society. After becoming a Baha'i and studying Ruhi books and understanding the importance of teaching children I really wanted to do something in this line. Then Dr. Sohayl talked to me and encouraged me to open a school. I finally decided to do that. The first school I opened was simply a wall with a thatched roof in a village. I got around thirty students in that. Apart from school books I used to hold children classes for them and we studied JYSEP books. After studying these books there was great transformation in the students. Some of these students have grown up now and are busy serving the community. Then I shifted my school to another place. This was a rented place the number of students increased to sixty. Here we continued with Children classes and JYSEP classes. Seeing the transformation in the students other parents started sending children to my school. Now there are one hundred and seventy five students in my school and I have my own building. The school is now five years old.

When children join my school they have a lot of caste feelings for example in the beginning they avoid talking or playing with children of lower castes but in no time as they attend children classes all these feelings disappear and they become the best of friends. Of course even now when a new student comes they first start fighting with children of other castes but in just two or three months they are completely transformed.

The good thing is that when the students leave my school after eighth class they are completely different from other students. Not only are they academically much better than others but also quite different from others in their behavior. I would like to narrate the story of Dipti and Jyoti two of my students who finished eighth class and went for further studies to another school. The teachers and the students were very surprised at the academic abilities as well as the character of these students. Finally they asked these two girls you are so perfect in everything which school did you study before. They said we studied in the school in the Jungle (that is how people refer to my school)! The teachers were surprised that my school has been able to train these students so well. Everyone in the village says that the students who go to Glory public School are absolutely different from children that go to other schools.

I would like to advise all the Baha'i youth that they should all try and open schools. In the beginning you will face many challenges but once you overcome these you can completely transform the society through these schools.

Vinod Kumar Banthara

Puppet Shows:

One activity which can bring about change is society is teaching how to overcome difficulties in society through drama and puppet show. For example we have the problem of Dowry, superstitions, disunity etc. Sometimes people commit suicide because of these problems. We frequently hear of dowry deaths. We organize street plays or puppet shows where we address these issues through drama. We show the problem and we address the problem by giving the solution in the form of a drama. Once people see these street plays or puppet shows they understand what they should do when faced with a similar situation.

One problem facing many villagers is that when someone is sick instead of go-

There can be no doubt that education will continue to be the greatest concern of Bahá'í social and economic development endeavors throughout the world in the foreseeable future.

It is interesting to note that even with small changes in a few components of the educational process, Bahá'í schools become known for their standards of excellence and enjoy considerable esteem in the communities within which they operate.

BIC

Let them also study whatever will nurture the health of the body and its physical soundness, and how to guard their children from disease.

Abdul-Baha

ing to a Doctor they go a Tantrik. He charges them money for performing religious rites and they have to bring materials for these rites and finally the patient does not even get well. Through Drama and puppet shows we try to teach people what happens when they go to a tantric instead of a Doctor. Now when somebody actually falls sick they immediately remember the play and they know what they should do.

We teach people about hygiene. For example how to get clean water, how to store water, washing of hands before and after eating, cutting nails, keeping our bodies clean etc. These we teach through plays and they learn while having fun.

We also teach people through plays about the teachings of prophets specially Baha'u'llah. You can teach hundreds of people through plays. Sometimes we teach them about the importance of children classes, and JYSEP classes. They see through plays and in practical terms what is the importance of children classes. How a naughty child when he joins a Baha'i Children Class slowly changes for the better.

Apart from performing I also teach people how to make puppets and how to perform street plays. I usually do not charge money for teaching them how to make puppets. In ten days I teach people how to make puppets, how to colour them and make them dance. Then we make stories and present these to audiences. Many of those I have taught are very successful in this field.

I have taught around 70-80 people how to make puppets. I have also taught around 15 people how to do street plays. This is something I have started recently and soon I will train more people. Since childhood I was interested in plays and I always used to win first prize in all competitions in the block level and district level as well. Now I have learnt to write plays and present them. I use these abilities God has given me to bring change in society. Many times I work for government agencies and their projects. But even when doing Government projects I put in all Baha'i ideas such as consultation, unity, world peace, transforming society. In all my programmes even for the Government I start with prayers and I make sure we talk about Unity. That is why my programmes are always successful. I have seen when I use Baha'u'llah's teachings I get much greater success. Before I would not use Baha'i ideas and I was not very successful but now after using Baha'i ideas I am much more successful.

Shatrughan Verma

There are many, many stories of people working to bring change in society. Slowly we will all have to learn to work in this field. These were a few examples but eventually the best results come when we see a need in a place and we take steps to rectify that need. If there are no schools we should open one, if there is lack of hygiene we should teach cleanliness if there is disunity we should work for unity. Many of us have a talent or a skill we should use these to train others. We should always look for ways and means of helping others and the society we live in.

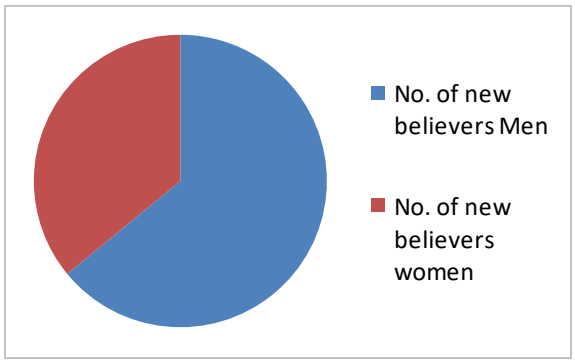
From helping a neighbor to large socio-economic projects, from taking a Children class or a Junior youth empowerment class to having the largest school in the world. From training people in making puppets to training teachers in becoming better and better, from simple clinics and medical camps to complex health projects, from managing a park to managing floods we have it all in this region. But finally it is when a large number of believers do simple acts of service that we can see a real change in the world.

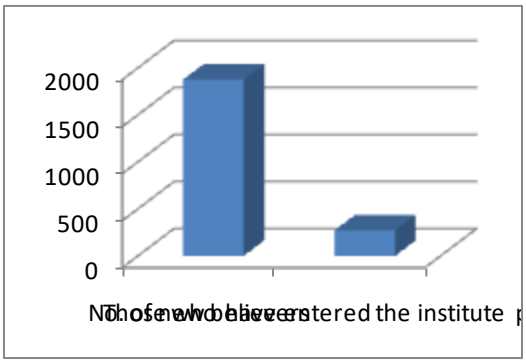
Teaching—The cornerstone of all activities

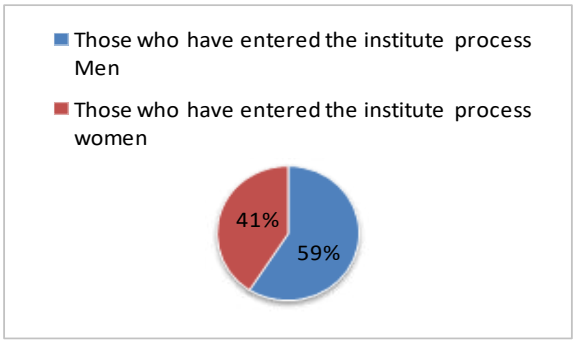
We have been told to consider teaching as the paramount and most urgent duty of every Baha'i. In fact all the other activities should eventually lead to an upsurge in teaching. In the past few years we have seen an upsurge in teaching activities. Themes from Anna's presentation has gone a long way in showing us how to teach. Last year one thousand eight hundred and seventy seven people accepted the faith. The number is actually more than this but this is the number of names so far entered in the program.

Out of those who accepted the Faith 1202 were men and 675 were women. That means 36 percent of those who accepted the Faith were women.

Again out of those who accepted the Faith two hundred and seventy three have done at least one course of the Ruhi institute. Out of these 112 were women and 161 were men. Put simply it means only 15 percent of those who accepted the Faith last year have entered the institute process. Normally we consider something around 50 percent as a healthy percentage. Increasing the number of those who enter the institute process after accepting the Faith should be the main topic of our deliberations in the months to come. It had been decided that each teaching phase should immediately be followed by the study of Ruhi 1. This is something that we need to firmly put in place.







We need to become more systematic in integrating new believers into the community life. If not in study circles then in other activities such as devotional gatherings, nineteen day feasts, holy day observations and finally through home visits. This is one of those things that needs our **<u>undivided attention</u>**.

This year we need to have a system where we keep track of every single person who accepts the Faith. This we can do when we realize deep in our hearts that "of all the gifts of God the greatest is the gift of teaching". We should never forget when we give the message to someone we are connecting him to Baha'u'llah. Once we do that, that

When the masses of mankind are awakened and enter the Faith of God, a new process is set in motion and the growth of a new civilization begins. Witness the emergence of Christianity and of Islam. These masses are the rank and file, steeped in traditions of their own, but receptive to the new Word of God, by which, when they truly respond to it, they become so influenced as to transform those who come in contact with them. God's standards are different from those of men. According to men's standards, the acceptance of any cause by people of distinction, of recognized fame and status, determines the value and greatness of that cause. But, in the words of Bahá'u'lláh:'The summons and the message which We gave were never intended to reach or to benefit one land or one people only. Mankind in its entirety must firmly adhere to whatsoever hath been revealed and vouchsafed unto it."

Universal House of Justice

person becomes our responsibility. Then we have to keep on nurturing him till he becomes able to connect others to Baha'u'llah. We have to understand that the new believers are our spiritual children - we cannot just leave them to themselves. This is a request on behalf of the Regional Baha'i Council to all individuals and institutions do not leave those you teach to themselves, nurture them as a mother nurtures her child, consider them as your spiritual children and treat them accordingly. What would you think of a mother or a father who brings a child into this world and then leaves him in the wilderness to fend for himself. The first thing we would like to request you to do is go back to those you have taught and start nurturing them.

From all that is going around us we can see that there is going to be a great upsurge in teaching. The signs are clear. The masses are ready. We will soon have people entering the Faith in hundreds and thousands. The question is no more are the people ready. The question is are we ready for such large numbers. We really need to focus on raising human resources in proportion the number of those entering the Cause

Dear friends,

FROM THE TREASURER'S DESK

We would like to thank all of those who have sacrificially contributed towards the Regional branch of the National fund. When we contribute to the fund we are actually showing Baha'u'llah that we love His Cause more than the Material things of the world. God really does not need our contributions but by giving something to the fund we are able to convert something material to something spiritual. Finally the amount we contribute is really the only amount we can take with us in our journey towards God. The writings clearly tell us the amount we give is not important what is important is that everyone should contribute and there should be some sacrifice involved in our contributions. As somebody put it when we contribute we should feel the pinch of it. Our contributions last year has been given below: Our expense was around Rs. 400,000 and our collection around 182000. That means we were only 45 percent self supporting. Apart from the money collected for the Regional branch of the state fund we have also contributed towards the temple fund and the National fund.

Month of November-07	**8883.00**
Month of December-07	**24600.00**
Month of January-08	**10300.00**
Month of February-08	**14620.00**
Month of March-08	**18000.00**
Month of April-08	**13300.00**
Month of May-08	**1730.00**
Month of June-08	**18220.00**
Month of July-08	**8314.00**
Month of August-08	**26860.00**
Month of September-08	**10441.00**
Month of October-08	**27298.00**
Total Collection	**182566.00**

This year we need to educate the believers more on the importance of Funds. When we look at our Baha'is we see those who have been regularly contributing to the funds are those who keep progressing materially as well as spiritually, If we do not educate our friends and believers about the importance of Funds we are depriving them of material as well as spiritual progress. Baha'u'llah wants to see Baha'is prosper we should assist our Baha'is and our communities prosper by teaching them the importance of funds.

Treasurer

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O God, my God! Illumine the brows of Thy true lovers, and support them with angelic hosts of certain triumph. Set firm their feet on Thy straight path, and out of Thine ancient bounty open before them the portals of Thy blessings; for they are expending on Thy pathway what Thou hast bestowed upon them, safeguarding Thy Faith, putting their trust in their remembrance of Thee, offering up their hearts for love of Thee, and withholding not what they possess in adoration for Thy Beauty and in their search for ways to please Thee.

(Compilations, Baha'i Prayers, p. 82)

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Building Baha'i institutions

We know that to bring about entry by troops we need to see a dramatic increase in the capacity of the individuals, the community and the institutions. The institute process has been busy building the capacity of the individual. As the core activities increase and neighborhood feasts improve we can slowly see our communities taking shape. We now need to pay more attention to the third participant of the plan—the institutions. A look at the reports shows that there has been an increase in the capacity of institutions last year. Last year 17 local assemblies held nineteen day feasts and conducted other activities in the Region. That means about 41 percent of our assemblies have started showing signs of activity. One good example of a cluster with institutions working is Banthara. Till last year only one assembly used to work. Now four out of five assemblies are actively functioning. They not only have regular nineteen day feasts and fund collection in these areas but they also celebrate the Baha'i Holy days in a grand manner. For example they had a huge celebration on Baha'u'llah's birthday. More than four hundred people were present. There was a great atmosphere of festivity and dinner was served to all the participants. This year they expect more than six hundred people for Baha'u'llah's birthday. Not just that apart from the combined celebrations on the eleventh some assemblies are going to have their own individual celebrations on the 12th.

We have to understand that entry by troops cannot take place unless our institutions raise their capacity. We know that our institutions are Divine in origin, which means they have mysterious powers that can change the world. We can use this mysterious power of the institutions to bring about growth and transformation in out villages towns and clusters. Experience has shown that no matter how far our individuals and communities advance without the Divine power of the institutions they cannot progress beyond a certain point. This means this year we need to look at our institutions with a new vision. If we are members of Assemblies or Cluster Growth Committees, we have to understand we have been appointed by God to serve His divine institutions for a year. We have to understand that being a member of a Divine institution is a special bounty as well as a spiritual responsibility. We have to read the messages and the writings and try to deepen our knowledge of our duties. We then have to work together unitedly to ensure the spiritual as well as the material transformation of our locality or cluster.

To be able to bring the benefits of a Divine institution to a cluster or a locality there are certain requirements. In the first place the members of the institution need to be absolutely united. They should also know what is expected from them at this time. Then the members need to sit together and consult among themselves, with the auxiliary Board member and with the community and come up with a small plan. Then they should put the plan into action. It is finally when we act that we are able to attract the Divine Bounties. Once the plan has been put into action the members need to consult frequently to make sure everything is going according to the plan and whenever needed adjustments are made. When one plan is over they should reflect on the achievements and the challenges and prepare the community for the next plan.

The time has come for the institutions to lead the way and reach the summit of glory for which they have been created. We hope those who have been elected this year as members of these institutions will be the ones who will achieve this. Every institution that is firmly established takes us one step closer to entry by troops and the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. What greater blessing than this!

"He hopes you will devote as much of your spare time as possible to the work of the Cause, especially in impressing upon the believers the importance of the Administration and helping them to really understand its purpose and all it can achieve once they get it to function properly. In other words it is a perfect form which must be animated by the spirit of the Cause. It is the ideal instrument to make spiritual laws function properly in the material affairs of this world."

Letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi

ANNUAL REPORT– 2007-08

SEEDBED CLUSTERS

Delhi
(A) Ghaziabad
(B) Noida
(C) Bulandsahar
Lucknow
(A) Itaunja
(B) Barabanki
(C) Fatehpur
Agra
(A) KAKUA
Banthra
(A) Unnao Purva
(B) Unnao City
Rasoolabad
(A) Jhinjak
Bidhuna
(A) Airwa Katra
(B) Kannauj
Sahar
(A) Jalaun
(B) Ajeet mal
Tirwa
(A) Chhibramau
(C) Kannauj
Kakori
(A) Mal
(B) Malihabad
(C) Unnao Hasanganj
Varanasi
(A) Sarhari
Kirakat
Azamgarh
Gorakhpur
(A) Aurangabad - after six month

In the month of August a National conference was organized at Lucknow. Member of the House of Justice Dr. Payman Mohajer and International Counsellor Ms. Urna were present in this conference. Among the things that came out of the conference was the concept of certain clusters acting as seedbed clusters. These seedbed clusters were to look after one, two or three neighbouring clusters and assist them to become IPG clusters. Twelve seedbed clusters were identified that would look after twenty two dependant clusters. The list of the seedbed clusters and the dependant clusters is given on the side.

Two agencies will work in these seedbed clusters a CGC (Cluster growth committee) and a CIT (Cluster institute team). These two agencies will extend the facilities of expansion and training to the dependant clusters. For the institutions in seedbed clusters this will be their primary objective in the months to come—making sure the dependant clusters move ahead as quickly as possible so that in a short time they can launch their own IPGs. We would like to request seedbed clusters to consider everything else as secondary to this all important work.

The believers in seedbed clusters should also consider short term pioneering to these dependant clusters. We hope these weak clusters become the main topic of discussion of seedbed clusters. In the same way that we conduct our own teaching phase and consolidation activities we should plan for these dependant clusters. Each seedbed cluster should make a plan as to when these dependant clusters will become IPG clusters and work closely on their plan.

The CGC will look after teaching activities, maintaining statistics, increasing devotional gatherings and looking after home visits. In consultation with the Auxiliary Board member and the RBC they will also encourage believers to pioneer to these clusters.

The CIT will look after the training of the believers, the increasing of study circles, Junior youth Empowerment programme and the classes for the education of children. We hope with the efforts of friends these new clusters will soon become as strong as the seedbed clusters.

The time has come, we believe, when increasing number of Local Spiritual Assemblies should assume responsibility for helping the teaching work at groups, isolated believers, and other Spiritual Assemblies in their neighborhood.

(Compilations, Lights of Guidance, p. 40)

THANK YOU

The Regional Baha'i Council would like to thank all the dear friends who have been serving with such dedication last year. We would first like to thank Counsellor Omid for his frequent visits and for helping the whole region remain focused. He is always available for advise even at 3.00 a.m.(If you don't believe us as Dreg Pal). We would next like to thank our Auxliliary Board members who have been in the forefront of activities. They have been leading the way in all fronts, be it teaching or consolidation, activity inside a cluster or in a neighbouring cluster, encouraging everyone to arise, assisting institutions in planning and generally setting a good example for all of us. We would like to thank Miss Martha for criss-crossing the region several times to make sure the clusters are moving ahead and the Junior youth programme is taking a proper shape. We would like to thank Mr. Dreg Pal who has to look after more clusters than any other person in the region. We would like to thank Mr. Uma Shankar for being both a pioneer and an Auxiliary Board member with the responsibility of many clusters. We would like to thank Dr. Nicole for not only trying to move the clusters forward but also looking after the external affairs. We would like to thank the three powerful ladies of Delhi, Ms. Gloria, Miss. Sujjata and Ms. Shaheda for working like an army and making sure that not only Delhi moves ahead but the other clusters in the region also move ahead. Mrs. Kiran Sinha we would like to thank for her visits to Rampur, Kirakat and other clusters. Mr. Ram Vilas we would like to thank for his efforts in establishing the Junior youth programme in Kakori. Mr. C. Lal we would like to thank for his efforts in kakori and Unnao hasanganj and Mr. Brajesh for his efforts in Banthara and Unnao. We would like to thank our father and son team, Dr. R. P. Singh and Mr. Suchit Singh for their efforts in bringing up the clusters in their area. Last but not least we would like to thank Mr. Sanjeev for his efforts in bringing up the clusters specially Itaunja as well as his contribution towards the propagation and protection of the Faith

We would then like to thank our dear pioneers who have been facing all challenges with a smile and a brave heart and who have been serving tirelessly trying to create a core group of believers in neighbouring clusters.

We would like to thank from the depth of our hearts our Regional coordinator both present and past, who have been serving the faith so diligently, setting a good example for all of us to follow. Mrs. Mohajer and Prem Singh have trained more people in the region than all the other believers put together. When in future the history of our Region will be written the names of these two dear believers will be in the forefront

We would then like to thank every coordinator for study circles, children classes and Junior youth empowerment classes and every facilitator in the region. Frankly speaking the whole success of failure of the plan depends on these dear believers. It is to them that we look for to see the multiplication of core activities. They are the ones who have to open the portals to entry by troops in cluster after cluster.

We would like to thank the actual army of our region. The teachers of children classes, the animators, the tutors, those who conduct devotional meetings, those who give their homes for nineteen day feasts, those who go for home visits and most importantly those who arise during the teaching phase to teach and then follow up on their teaching. These people are our real heroes and to these we are extremely grateful.

We would next like to thank the members of our institutions, the members of the institute Board, our Cluster growth committees and Local spiritual assemblies. These dear friends have been leading the community from strength to strength. Finally we would like to thank each and every valiant soldier of Baha'u'llah serving His Glorious Cause. We hope this year you will re-double your efforts so that we can see entry by troops taking shape in front of our eyes.

Regional Baha'i Council of UP, Delhi and Uttaranchal